

# Worksession

<b>Agenda Item #</b>	7
<b>Meeting Date</b>	7 March 2005
<b>Prepared By</b>	Sara Anne Daines HCD Director
<b>Approved By</b>	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager

<b>Discussion Item</b>	Old Takoma Business Association request for resolution of support of Neighborhood BusinessWorks Application in furtherance of the Old Takoma Main Street Initiative
<b>Background</b>	<p>The Old Takoma Business Association (OTBA) is applying for a grant of approximately \$75,000 from the State of Maryland through its Neighborhood BusinessWorks Program (NBWP) in furtherance of the Main Street Takoma Initiative.</p> <p>The Council must, prior to the submission of the proposed application, adopt a resolution of support for the following described projects and approve the requested match for the NBWP grant.</p> <p><b>Overview of Proposed Application</b></p> <p>Five projects are proposed as part of the organization's commercial revitalization strategy: the implementation of a façade and landscape improvement program; the fabrication and installation of up to three pedestrian kiosks; the design, fabrication and installation of signage for the new Main Street Takoma office; the production of a calendar of events; and the development of a promotional event. Each of the projects is included in the organization's 2005 Main Street Takoma workplan and is designed to improve the vibrancy of the business district and to provide for increased business success in the area.</p> <p><b>Facade and Landscape Improvements:</b></p> <p>OTBA is requesting \$60,000 in NBWP funds, which will be matched with private investment, for the initial capitalization of a new façade and landscape improvement program. As proposed, participating business and property owners would be reimbursed up to 50 percent of the costs of eligible improvements.</p> <p><b>Pedestrian Kiosks:</b></p> <p>OTBA proposes partnering with the City of Takoma Park on the purchase and installation of up to three pedestrian kiosks in the Old Takoma area. If the application is approved by the State, funds previously allocated by the Council for the Gateway Wayfinding Sign System would be used as a match for the requested NBWP grant.</p>

<b>Background continued</b>	<p><b>Marketing and Promotion:</b></p> <p>The balance of the requested grant funds would be used to promote the Main Street Takoma initiative and the organization. Projects include signage for OTBA's new office, a calendar of events, and the second annual 4th of July ice cream social.</p> <p>OTBA's Executive Director, Ms. Mary Stover, will be present at the worksession to provide the Council with an overview of the proposed application.</p>
<b>Policy</b>	<p>The viability of the Old Takoma district is important to the economic health and quality of life of the community and its continued improvement and revitalization is a local economic development goal.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">An excerpt from Resolution of Support for the Designation of Old Town/Takoma Junction as a Maryland Main Street</p>
<b>Fiscal Impact</b>	<p>The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Neighborhood BusinessWorks Program provides flexible gap financing in the form of grants to nonprofit organizations such as the Old Takoma Business Association for projects benefitting neighborhood revitalization areas. Financing ranges from \$25,000 to \$500,000 for up to 50 percent of a project's total cost. Grants typically range from \$25,000 to \$250,000, depending on the nature of the project.</p> <p>Funds previously approved by the Council for the Gateway Wayfinding project are proposed as a match for the purchase of the planned kiosks. No additional city funds would be expended.</p>
<b>Attachments</b>	<p>DRAFT - Neighborhood BusinessWorks Application - Executive Summary DRAFT - Resolution of Support</p>
<b>Recommendation</b>	<p>Council to review and comment on the proposed application and request for matching funds.</p>
<b>Special Consideration</b>	<p>The proposed application is to be submitted to the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization by March 31.</p> <p>A Resolution of Support must be adopted by the Council if OTBA is to be considered eligible for funding.</p>

## **OTBA NBWP Grant Application Project Summary**

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OTBA is applying for an approximately \$75,000 grant from the Neighborhood BusinessWorks Program (formerly Neighborhood Business Development Program) administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. We will be submitting our application to the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization by March 31.

We are applying for funding for five projects as part of the Main Street Takoma commercial revitalization strategy: a façade and landscape improvement program; fabrication and installation of three pedestrian kiosks; design, fabrication and installation of signage for the new Main Street Takoma office; production of a calendar of events; and implementation of a fourth of July promotional event. The proposed projects are significant elements of the Main Street Takoma workplan for 2005. Each of the projects has been designed to improve the vibrancy of the Old Takoma business district and provide for increased business success in the area.

OTBA is requesting \$60,000 in NBWP funds, which will be matched with \$60,000 in private investment, in order to implement a façade and landscape improvement program. The façade and landscape improvement program, which will provide up to 50 percent reimbursement for eligible improvements, addresses our historic commercial buildings' needs for repairs and restoration in order to improve the area's attractiveness to potential businesses, shoppers and clients. The City of Takoma Park's Façade Advisory Board and Historic Takoma support the façade and landscape improvement program and have agreed to participate in its design, marketing and implementation.

OTBA is partnering with the City of Takoma Park on the pedestrian kiosks project. We intend to apply for NBWP funds for 50% of the total project cost which would be matched by a city investment of the same amount. The proposed kiosks, which are being designed as part of the city-wide Wayfinding signage program, will be placed near the Takoma Metro, in the Takoma Junction and/or in Old Town. Each kiosk will provide a pedestrian scale street map and business locator system for the entire historic commercial district. The backside of each kiosk will provide protected space for OTBA to post notices related to Old Takoma events.

The remaining \$2,600 of OTBA's grant request is needed for OTBA office signage in order to better promote the Main Street Takoma initiative; a calendar of events, which will be distributed at area merchants and increase promotion of Old Takoma; and our second annual 4th of July ice cream social that publicizes and generates interest in the Takoma Main Street program, which depends on volunteer support.

Submitted by Old Takoma Business Association  
March 2, 2004

Introduced by

**RESOLUTION 2005-**

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT OF NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESSWORKS PROGRAM  
FINANCING FOR THE OLD TAKOMA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

**WHEREAS,** the City of Takoma Park Maryland is interested in promoting the revitalization of our community by encouraging the development and expansion of businesses within the Old Takoma area; and

**WHEREAS,** the Old Takoma Business Association (OTBA) has applied to the Neighborhood BusinessWorks Program for financing for the following projects: the development and implementation of a facade and landscaping improvement program, the fabrication and installation of pedestrian kiosks, and an expanded marketing and promotions program, each of which are designed to further the goals of OTBA's Main Street Takoma Initiative; and

**WHEREAS,** the described projects are located in a State-approved locally designated revitalization area and conform to the local zoning code; and

**WHEREAS,** the regulations of the Neighborhood BusinessWorks Program require that all projects receiving program financing be approved and supported by the appropriate governing body of the locality in which the project is situated.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of Takoma Park hereby endorses the financing of the Old Takoma Business Association's projects through the Neighborhood BusinessWorks Program.

Approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2005

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Kathy Porter, Mayor

Attest:

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Catherine E. Waters, CMC/AAE  
City Clerk